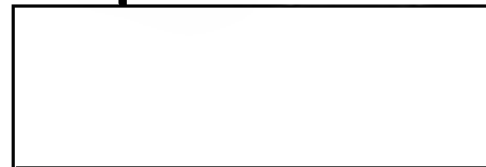


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COMMUNIST CHINA - SOUTHERN YEMEN: Peking's dispatch of 16 military officers to Aden suggests an attempt to improve its competitive position versus the Soviets in Southern Yemen.

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[redacted] eight of the group are believed to be helicopter pilots and engineering officers and eight are regular army personnel. The contingent probably will act as field advisers to the Southern Yemeni armed forces--a function previously exclusively in Soviet hands. More Chinese military personnel are reported due to arrive shortly.

The Aden regime thus apparently has at least partially taken up the Chinese offer made last August during President Salim Rubai's visit to Peking to send military advisers and instructors and possibly small arms. While in Peking Rubai obtained a \$43-million credit that will be in addition to a \$12-million credit extended two years earlier. Most of the credits, which are largely unused, will be for road construction and several smaller projects.

Peking has for some time been attempting to whittle down Soviet influence in Aden. Both China and the Soviet Union have supporters within the Southern Yemen ruling clique, but thus far Moscow's friends have generally had the upper hand. The USSR has been Southern Yemen's major source of military assistance; Moscow is likely to be upset at the Chinese entrance into this field and may try to limit Peking's role.

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USSR-BERLIN: Hints at eventual movement in Moscow's position coupled with a reiteration of standard arguments highlighted the Soviet presentation at the four-power advisers' meeting on 23 February.

The Russians, as at the previous advisers' meeting on 16 February, hinted that Moscow was prepared "in principle" to acknowledge in some form the West German right to exercise consular functions on behalf of West Berliners and to include West Berlin in West German treaties. The Soviets, however, were careful to avoid any specific commitments. The Soviets also made clear that eventual compromises on these questions would be dependent on the conclusion of a Berlin settlement satisfactory to Moscow in other respects.

The Soviets did not spell out any changes in their criteria for an acceptable agreement. As before, they insisted that an agreement must place specific restrictions on West Germany's role in the city, and conversely, provide for an enhancement of the Soviet position in West Berlin. In this connection, they expressed annoyance at an Allied decision to cancel a Sovexport reception in West Berlin yesterday which the Soviets evidently had meant to endow with a quasi-official status. However, they stopped short of making any specific threats of reprisal, and it was agreed that the advisers will meet again five days before the next ambassadorial meeting on 9 March.

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